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SERMON I.

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THE USES AND LESSONS OF DISAPPOINTMENT.

"My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away; which are blackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid: what time they wax warm they vanish: when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place. The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish. The troops of Tema looked; the companies of Sheba waited for them. They were confounded, because they had hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed."—Job. 6: 15-20.

The meaning of this passage, as uttered by Job, is, that he had been *disappointed*. He was in deep affliction, and had reasonably hoped, when his friends came to him, that they would have comforted him in his sorrows; but all the expectation which he had cherished from that quarter had failed. They had not taken any such view of the causes of his sufferings, or addressed to him any such words of comfort, as would be adapted to cheer his heart, and alleviate his woes. He looked for the language of condolence and compassion—for something to cheer his heart, and to uphold him in his trials; but for this he had looked in vain. This thought he illustrates by one of the most beautiful comparisons

ever employed. He had been like weary and thirsty travellers in a desert, who came to the place where they hoped and expected to find water, but who, when they came, found that the streams were dried up, and had vanished away. Those streams were swollen in the rainy seasons, or when the ice dissolved on the mountains; but in other seasons, they were absorbed in the sands of the desert, and left their beds entirely dry. A comparison of a man who thus deceives and disappoints, is common in Arabia; and the comparison would be appreciated nowhere better than there, where the thirsty and weary caravan approaches the place where such streams were supposed to run, or where it had found refreshment formerly, and now finds only a dry bed of stones or of sand. Job speaks of such a caravan; speaks of their hopes, and their disappointment: "The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them. They were confounded because they had hoped; they came thither and were ashamed." They had confidently expected to find water there; they came, and found none; they were downcast and sad that the waters had failed, and they looked on one another with confusion and dismay; they were ashamed as if there had been something foolish and wrong in cherishing such expectations—a feeling which we are all apt to associate with disappointment; and Job represents himself as having such a feeling when he thinks of the vain hope which he had cherished of consolation from these persons whom he calls his "brethren." Perhaps the meaning of the passage may, after these explanations, be better understood by repeating the text, translated a little more literally:

My brethren are faithless as a brook,
Like the streams of the valley that pass away;
Which are turbid by means of the [melted] ice,
In which the snow is hid, [by being dissolved.]
In the time when they become warm, they evaporate;
When the heat cometh, they are dried up from their places.
The channels of their way wind round about;
They go into nothing—and are lost.
The caravans of Tema look;
The travelling companies of Sheba expect to see them.
They are ashamed that they have relied on them;
They come even to the place, and are confounded.

The general subject, therefore, on which I propose to address you is, *Disappointment*—its uses and lessons. All afflictions—and disappointment may be regarded as one of the greatest and the most common of them, and as in some measure entering into all others—have their own uses, and teach their own lessons; and it is our business, as well as we can, to learn those uses and lessons, and to profit by them. In a world where disappointments so often occur, and may occur in respect to any hope cherished, or any anticipation entertained, and where they seem so much to

be ordered by some presiding power, baffling our schemes, and blasting our most fondly cherished, and, as we think, our reasonable hopes, it is well to inquire why they occur, and what ends they are designed to answer. As there are few, if any, who have not in some way been disappointed, and none who may not be, the subject will have a practical interest for us all. It will be convenient in the arrangement of the subject, to notice the forms in which disappointments occur in the world; the reasons why they occur; and the lessons which they should teach us—or their uses as a part of a divine moral administration over human affairs.

I. In the first place, I propose to notice the forms in which they occur.

They are always in reference to some hopes or expectations which we had cherished, and, of course, may be as numerous as our hopes, or may extend to any thing in regard to which we cherished hope. There are two uses of *hope* considered as a mode in which the mind acts, or considered with reference to the arrangements of the divine government under which we live. One is, to stimulate us to exertion by the prospect of some good to be obtained and enjoyed; the other is, to be held in the divine hand as a means of checking, restraining, humbling, recovering, and controlling us. In the former aspect, it is a device super-added to reason and conscience in stimulating us to honorable effort; in the latter aspect, it is held in the hand of God as a means of rebuking us if we are wrong, of humbling us if we are proud, of recalling us to a right path if we go astray, and of turning our thoughts to other objects if we have fixed our expectations on those which would not be for our good.

Considered, as they must be, with reference to the hopes that we cherish, and the plans which we form in life, the disappointments which we meet with may be grouped under certain classes.

(1.) They are, first, such as relate to the acquisition of property. Perhaps the most universal of all plans that men lay, are those which pertain to this; the most general of all desires, is the desire to be rich. That the great mass of those who, under free institutions, aim at competence merely, are successful, need not be doubted, but the majority of those who form plans for the acquisition of property are by no means satisfied with simply aiming at competence, and are therefore disappointed. They desire not only to have a competence, but to be richer than others; not merely to obtain enough of this world's goods for their families as to any reasonable demands, and to do good to others, but to "join house to house, and field to field, that they may be left alone in the midst of the land;" seeking wealth with reference to another and quite a distinct object from any thing connected with utility—the *reputation* of being rich. That the great mass of those who

with such ends seek for property are destined to be disappointed, no one can doubt. There is not property enough in the world to gratify the rapacious desires of all who thus seek it, and the large prizes are conferred on the few. There is some influence which counteracts the efforts of the mass; and while here and there one—whether for his own good or not, is another question—obtains the prize, the mass of scramblers for gain go down to their graves having failed of the object; many of them with much less than they began life with, and many, literally applying to themselves the language of one of the richest men of his age: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither."

(2.) Equally subject to disappointment is a second class of persons—those who aim at distinction in honor and office. The class of those who seek this is less than the former; the proportion of the disappointed is not less. The desire of distinction is one that is deeply seated in our nature as it is now, and is the perversion of a desire that existed in the bosom of man in a state of innocence, and that will be found in the bosoms of all holy beings. The original desire, as it may exist in the bosom of angels, as it was implanted in Adam, and as it may attend us hereafter in a high and holy world, is the desire of excellence—of virtue—of the cultivation of our powers—of making as much of ourselves, and of doing as much in the sphere where we are placed, as possible. This is proper; but it is easy to see that when the mind is turned away from original rectitude, and brought under the influence of perverted feelings, it may become quite a different thing. Instead of being a mere desire of excellence in itself, or of the highest cultivation of our powers, it becomes a desire of *excelling others*; and thus becomes the foundation of the hope of distinction, of the aspirings of ambition, and extensively of the wish for office. Perverted thus, it becomes in many in early life, and characteristically through life, the ruling passion; and as such it lays the foundation for envy, and intrigue, and political cabals, and far-extended arrangements of doubtful morality to reach the end; in multitudes of cases contemplating desolation and blood. It is sad to reflect how many of these aspirants have been disappointed; how few have won the prize that they sought. It is humiliating to all thoughts of ambition to reflect, in regard to the numberless millions who have lived, in whose bosoms this feeling, to a greater or less extent, has existed, how few of them are successful. Of those who have sought to be conquerors and consuls; of those who have sought the prize for eloquence and poetry; of those who have sought for coronets or crowns; of those who struggled at the Olympic and the Isthmian games; of those who have sought the button that distinguishes a high mandarin, or a star to designate a rank of nobility; of those who sought to excel in the use of the chisel in the days of Phidias, or the

pencil in the days of Rubens; of those who sought to be good farmers or mechanics in the days of Augustus, or to be chief among the shepherds in Arcadia, how few are there whose names have reached us, how few who reached the prize in their own days. Of the multitudes in our land who may be now laying their plans to secure to themselves the office of President of the United States, some half a dozen successively will reach the prize; of the scramblers for that office now, one or two will reach it, and while they occupy it, their disappointed rivals will have passed away.

(3.) Equally subject to disappointment is a third class—those who attempt to build up their family name, and obtain distinction in their children, either as founders of families, or as training their children for elevation of rank, or talent, or science. There is almost no hope in the bosom of a parent so strong as this; almost none that is so likely to be disappointed, or where an overruling Power interposes as he pleases. The rich, the great, princes, nobles, professors, statesmen, are set aside in the distribution of honors of this kind; a blight rests on the efforts to found a family name, or to gain celebrity in our children, and honors are scattered by a rule that no one can study out. Newton is taken from humble life, and not from a family ambitious of a family name; Luther, a poor and penniless monk, is made to fill a space in the world's history which princes would seek in vain; Shakspeare is the son of a dealer in gloves, Chalmers the son of a petty merchant, Foster the son of a poor weaver, Burns a plow-boy—and where should the test stop?—while, in the ranks of nobility, many an ambitious father has seen his sons grope along beneath mediocrity, or sink into disgrace. Napoleon attempted to perpetuate his name as the founder of a dynasty; added to all the crimes of ambition and war, the crime that makes us weep more than any thing that he did, in divorcing his faithful wife—for there is no blaze of glory that can gild such an act in domestic relations. God frowned upon that wicked act, and the weak and imbecile heir to the most splendid throne of the world, sunk in early years undistinguished to the grave, and the name and dynasty is extinct. The author of *Waverley*, himself truly great in his proper sphere, sought to lay the foundation of an illustrious family, and aimed to perpetuate his name by a title which weaker men seek as their sole distinction; but the title has passed away, and he lives only in his own department—his works. An ancient prophet saw a man endeavoring to place himself among the great, to lay the foundation for permanent remembrance. He was building for himself and family a splendid sepulchre, as if his situation in an honored office which he held was secure, and his family would long remain after him. God sent the prophet to the man. "Go," said he, "and get thee unto this treasurer, even unto Shebna, which is over the house, and say, What hast thou here? and

whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, as he that heweth out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock? Behold, the Lord will carry thee away with a mighty captivity, and will surely cover thee. He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball into a large country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's house. And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down." (Isa. 22 : 15-19.) Of all the plans and hopes of men, there are few that are more subject to disappointment than those which are founded on the hope of perpetuating an honored name in a family, or raising a family to eminence. Your children will be rarely what you hoped they would be in your ambitious feelings, when your hopes reached beyond respectability and usefulness, and some boy from a mechanic's shop or a humble farm will bear away the prize which you hoped would be theirs. There are more disappointments that occur in regard to children than probably arise from any other source. There are more expectations that are not met, more hopes that are blasted; for sickness, or death, or inefficiency, or inferiority in any respect, or an evil course, often, alas! how often disappoints long and tenderly cherished hopes.

(4.) Equally subject to disappointment is a fourth class—those who seek for happiness solely in the things of this life. I mean permanent, solid, satisfying happiness. Multitudes seek it; a few profess to find it to an extent that rewards their efforts; the man disappointed in one thing, and at one time, hopes to find it in another. When a child—credulous in believing every thing—I ran toward a rainbow to find the pot of gold, which I was told I would find if I came where it touched the earth; and older children are always doing the same thing. The rainbow recedes. The boy can not fix it to one place. He comes where its arch seemed to rest on the earth, and now it rests on a spot equally remote. You run through pelting rain to reach it, but it always recedes. You seek for pleasure in the world; and, as the good that your soul needs, you will not find it. Here and there one will say at the close of a ball, that she enjoyed all she hoped; but how many feelings there are which are not expressed there! All who become Christians say that they never were sure of finding happiness in the world; and Solomon, and Goethe, and Chesterfield, and Malibran say the same thing of themselves. Never was there a more beautiful image to express this than that in my text. The weary and the thirsty travellers in the desert come to the place where the streams of water were supposed to run, and haste to slake their thirst. They look, and the bed of the torrent is dried up. "When the heat cometh, they are dried up from their place. The channels of their way wind round about; they go into nothing, and are lost. The caravans of Tema look, the travelling

companies of Sheba expect to see them. They are ashamed that they have relied on them; they came to the place, and are confounded.”*

II. I proposed, in the second place, to consider the reasons of these disappointments. I wish to place myself and you in an attitude where we can look at them, and to inquire how it is to be explained that they so often occur, or why so many are, in fact, disappointed. This part of our subject is not difficult.

(1.) The first reason is, because the plans and expectations which were formed, were beyond any reasonable ground of calculation, based on the ordinary course of events, or what ordinarily happens to man. They are not made by taking into view what usually occurs in the course of human affairs. There are many illusions that play upon the minds, and around the hearts of men, and nowhere do they more frequently occur than in regard to the very matter under consideration. Those illusions arise from several sources. We are either ignorant or forgetful of the usual course of events, and do not take that into our calculation; or, we anticipate in the future what does not commonly occur, forgetting how many fail in their expectations, and how few are successful; or we trust in our “star,” or our destiny, and suppose that ours is to be an exception to the common lot; or, we are merely *presumptuous*, relying on what we suppose is our talent, or something in us that will except us from the common lot of mankind; or, we feel that there is a charm around us and our family, and that we must be exempt from the common failures and calamities of the race. The consequence is, that we form our plans with only the slightest impression of the possibility that we shall fail or be disappointed, and engage in their execution with as sanguine a feeling as if we were certain that they would be all successful. As a law of our nature it is wise that this should be so, if we would only admit the *possibility* that we may be disappointed, and if we would not murmur when disappointment comes; for life would soon be stagnant, and the hands would droop, and the knees tremble, and the sinews of effort be destroyed, if we either saw what disappointments actually await us, or even if fear, in regard to the future, had as close a correspondence with the reality as hope has; or, rather, if fear, magnifying any thing, took the place which hope now does. Hope goes far beyond the reality in most instances, and gilds the future with bright beams, and makes the unknown more cheerful to us than the present and the known, and draws the thoughts along from the gloomy present to what may be more cheering in time to come. He who made our frame *could* have given to *fear* the

* See also the result of the best experiment ever made on the subject, to find happiness in the world, in Ecclesiastes 2 : 1-11.

place which *hope* now has ; and as hope now sheds a cheerful light on the future, so fear might have shrouded all that is to come in gloom. That he has not done that, is to be traced to nothing else than benevolence : to make us happy in the cheerful or the cheerless present, and, in any disappointment that may occur, to draw our thoughts along to a better world.

(2.) A second reason why we are disappointed in our hopes is, that our expectations were such as were improper in themselves. They related to things in which we ought not to have cherished hope ; to objects in which benevolence to us required that we should be disappointed. We cherished the hope because we wished our pride to be gratified ; or because we secretly supposed we had some claim on God ; or because we wished to indulge in some sensual propensity, which it was well should not be gratified ; or because, if we had been gratified, we should have desired nothing better and higher. We have laid plans which are really against our own interests, and which in every point of view were wrong, and we could reasonably expect only that we should come in collision with some law of nature, and impinge on something in the course of events that would demonstrate the error of the course.

(3.) A third reason may be stated for the fact that we are so often disappointed. It is from the reference of disappointment to our own good. It may not be that the thing hoped for is in itself absolutely wrong, or because, all things considered, there were not enough prospects of success to justify us in forming the plan ; but it may be that He who sees all things, perceives that success might be perilous to us in every way. What would be the effect on most persons, formed as we are, if every thing went on smoothly through life ; if every plan were successful ; if every hope were realized ; if all our plans for gain uniformly turned out well ; if our children were all that we hoped they would be ; if we found in the gay circle all the joy which we anticipated ; if we had as many flatterers and admirers as we wished ? Who can be ignorant of that effect ; and who can be ignorant in how much better state one may be in regard to his own best good hereafter when disappointed, than he might be if he had been entirely and completely successful ? The state of mind at the very point when our fairest hopes are blasted, may be a better state—considered with reference to the whole of our existence—than the state of mind at the very moment of highest prosperity. The wealth that we sought—how do we know how much injury it might have done us ; into what perilous circles it might have drawn us ; what new and dangerous acquaintances it might have led us to seek, or that would have sought us on its account ; the bad passions that its possession might have engendered and fostered in the heart ; the self-complacency which it might have

produced in our bosoms and the unconcern in regard to the life to come of which it might have been the cause? There is One that knows us better than we do ourselves, and that can better at-temper and arrange in regard to us the things which occur in this present world.

III. I proposed, in the third place, to notice some of the lessons which disappointments should teach us, or their uses as a part of the divine moral administration over human affairs. The remarks under this head will be brief, and will constitute all that will be said as an application of the subject.

(1.) The first which I shall notice will be, that our plans pertaining to this life should all be formed with this possibility in view. I say *possibility*; I do not say with gloomy foreboding. I have already adverted to a wise and benevolent provision in our nature, by which we are much more inclined to look on the bright side of things in the future than the dark side; much more to hope that our plans will be successful than to fear that they will fail. Life is thus rendered cheerful rather than gloomy; for life would be a burden, and we should all sink down to inaction, and should soon pray that Death might hasten his lingering footsteps, if fear had the same place in the economy which hope now has. But while nature prompts us to look with cheerful hope on the future, and while it would be against the laws of our nature and the whole influence of religion to exchange that for gloom, the thoughts to which I have adverted may be allowed to *moderate* our anticipations, and to enter as an element into the formation of our plans; to mellow the too dazzling light by the intermingling of rays less perilous to the vision, and to produce the effect which, perhaps, time may on a picture, bringing it nearer to reality. Many whom I now address have experienced disappointments, and the effect should be, and will be, greatly to moderate our expectations from this world, in reference to the remainder of our course. A much larger number—for the young always outnumber the aged—are forming their plans and expectations in regard to the future. Nature prompts to cheerfulness and to joy in the hopes which are held out, and the future is redolent of sweets, and glowing with beauty. Flowers springing up in the path, and silvery fountains, and an unclouded sky, and balmy breezes, and sounds of music, and domestic bliss, and returning cargoes protected from storms, and increasing wealth, and the joyous flow of the spirits, and the exulting beating of the heart in the fulfillment of every desire—these things gild all the future, and make it as bright as a vision of Arabic fancy. But these things may not be; and though gloom and despondency are not what I aim to produce, yet I would produce moderate and chastened desires. Flowers may spring up in the path, but so may thorns; fountains may bubble, and purling

streams may run along, but "the streams of brooks may pass away, when the heat cometh they may be dried up from their places and the caravans of Tema, and the travelling companies of Sheba, be ashamed and confounded," when they come, weary and thirsty to find them; health may fail, and rivals be successful, and tempests blow when you expected the balmy zephyr, and there may be the voice of wailing while the harp shall be laid aside, and the ship may be stranded, and the wife that you take to your bosom may grow pale and die, and the little boy so bright and so lovely, your hope and joy, may be borne to an early grave, or may live to break your heart. Every thing teaches us, and the disappointments which actually occur, most effectually—that the expectations which we form respecting this life should be subdued and moderate; if there are any where there is no doubt, they can be derived only from the life to come.

(2.) A second, and a material lesson, therefore, is, that we should form such plans, and cherish such hopes, as will not be subject to disappointment. Those to which I now refer are such as relate to religion, and are founded on that. Those which are based on religion, on the sought favor of God, on the hope of heaven, are the only expectations which are sure not to be disappointed, and not to fail. Others *may* be, indeed, successful; these certainly *will* be. Around others there can be no certainty of calculation; in this, there can be no peril of a failure. He that has a well-founded hope of heaven, has a permanent security for happiness; and in whatever else of a subordinate nature he may be disappointed, he will not be in this. This is put beyond the reach of tempests and storms, of fire, famine, and flood, of pestilence and war, of blight and mildew, of the loss of life or health, of the rivalry of competitors, and the malice of enemies; beyond any danger of a failure from the want of strength and skill of our own, or the malignant skill of our foes, for it is in the hand of a covenant-keeping and a faithful God.

If you ask me, as perhaps you would be disposed to, here, What is the *evidence* that there is no disappointment in this; what proofs that the hopes fostered by religion are successful; what demonstration that the Christian actually reaps the reward which religion is supposed to promise?—there is much that could be said in reply. You admit—for you can not deny it—that all *other* plans and purposes are liable to disappointment. You ask: What is the evidence that this is not also? I have no time to go into an extended reply to this obvious and proper question; but I will state, in few words, what is the *nature* of the evidence on which we rely. There is, then—

First, the fact that they who become true Christians are *not* disappointed in regard to what religion promises in this life. They often give up much in order to obtain it; they sacrifice

worldly pleasures ; they abandon the hopes of earthly distinction ; they part with beloved friends ; they turn away from these things not because they are more unsuccessful than others, or have less brilliant prospects, but because they feel themselves called by their Saviour to seek higher ends and aims ; and they declare with one voice that religion has *not* thus far disappointed them ; that it has furnished all, in regard to peace of mind, and joy in the prospect of heaven, and support in trial, which it promised. There is—

Secondly, the fact that as far as we can trace the influence of religion attending those who leave the world, it does not disappoint them. We have not yet, ourselves, gone into the dark valley, but we have seen those who have ; and as far as we can accompany them or learn their feelings, we have every evidence that religion does not disappoint them there ; that when they come to die, it is all that they ever hoped it would be in illuminating the dark valley, and shedding a cheerful light on the regions beyond. Why should we not believe that it attends them quite *through* that valley, and meets them with its rich promised blessings beyond the “swelling flood” ? There is—

Thirdly, the conviction of the mind itself, that religion will *not* disappoint. Every man feels this and knows it. Every man is assured that if he had true religion he would have an unfailing source of consolation ; that wherever else there might be disappointment, there would be none in the happy influences which he would hope from religion on his own soul. And there is—

Fourthly, the promise of God. That promise is sure, and is an anchor of the soul. There is no promise from heaven of success in an endeavor to gain property ; there is none that cheers the scramblers for office ; there is none that greets the lovers of pleasure when they enter the theatre or the ball-room ; there is none which can be a basis of calculation to him who has retired from business, and who seeks to find ease and comfort in old age in worldly gratifications. The only thing of the nature of *promise* that shines on the path of man is that which is found in religion ; and, as it is a truth which no one can dispute, that the promises of God in regard to the happy influences of religion are verified in this life, why should we doubt that they will be in the life to come ?

Those, therefore, and they are many, who have felt what disappointment is in regard to worldly hopes and prospects, religion invites to herself, with the assurance that she will never disappoint them. She points them to their own lives ; reminds them how often they have failed in their hopes, and seen their fairest prospects blighted ; and in view of all this, she comes to them and instructs them that disappointment was suffered to meet them in these things, *in order* that they might be led to seek a better portion for their souls, and she now points them to heaven as to a

place where disappointment never comes. Happy would it be if the failures in worldly hopes should lead men to seek that where their hopes will all be fulfilled!

To those who are in earlier life, who have not yet experienced disappointment, or scarcely known what it is, religion comes, and placing herself before them, would spare them the pain of bitter disappointment altogether. She would tell them not to form their plans solely or mainly for this life, but to cherish sober and chastened views of what this world can give, or to admit the possibility of a failure in what it promises as an element in their calculation; and, admitting this, to seek the crown that is unfading—the reward that does not glide away when you seem to have laid your hand upon it. Before hopes fondly cherished shall have been blasted, before a cloud shall come over your bright anticipations, before a cold and withering hand shall be stretched out to palsy what seems now full of hope, seek that which will never be blasted; on which a cold and withering hand shall never be laid; and which, fresh with immortal vigor, shall never be palsied by age, or smitten down in death. Be a sincere and humble Christian; and though you may have trials, you will have learned how to turn away the most cruel edge of disappointment; though you may not be rich, or honored, or admired, or prospered here, you will be rich in more valued wealth, honored by those whose esteem is of more value than earthly laurels, admired among the saints as the redeemed of the Lord, and prospered with a prosperity such as shall make the highest success in worldly schemes not worthy to be named.

S E R M O N I I .

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THE SPIRITUAL BODY.

"So is also the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."—1 Cor. 15 : 42, 43, 44.

In the present discourse, I shall treat, not of the fact or the doctrine of the resurrection, but of the product of the resurrection. The fact of the resurrection of the body I assume—and not altogether assume it, but prove it by one text of Scripture which no exegetical torture can make to speak any thing else: "Marvel not

at this: for the hour is coming when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth, they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation."

At the present time we have to do with THE RESURRECTION BODY. And at the outset, I will premise two things.

1. One is, that in our description of the raised, reconstructed body, we have in view, almost exclusively, the bodies of the just—those who come forth to a resurrection of life. The Bible does so. It does not go into any detail or particularity respecting the future bodies of the wicked. From the circumstance, the inference has been drawn, that the wicked will not be raised. But the fact of their rising out of the grave, is as clearly and as strongly asserted, as the rising of the righteous. The fact is the main thing; and it is the unescapable thing. There is no getting away from the fact, that there is to be a coming forth of the body from the grave.

This leads to the other matter I wish to premise, namely, that nothing said on the theoretical part of the subject should be seized and used to prejudice the great fact in the case.

2. The body is to be raised at the last day: it is to be made a spiritual body. These are facts—the rising and the product of that rising—solemn, incontrovertible verities. But we may think, imagine, speculate about the qualities of that spiritual body. It is proper that we should glean and gather as we can, into one ray, all the scattered light of Scripture—proper that we gain what intimation we can from reason and the analogy of things. In this way, we frame a discourse upon the spiritual body. But it is liable to this charge on the part of those disposed to pick flaws in our argument, that it is chiefly speculation, theory, fancy. Furthermore, it is liable to this sophism, that it being speculation, there is, therefore, no reliable truth about it. The sophism, rather the ruinous deception is, in burying the great heaven-descended and heaven-illuminated fact, beneath the reasonings and the speculations upon the fact.

3. The FACT is God's; and it will live and shine when the sun is done shining. We ask you to hold on upon that. If you do not, we tell you, that will hold on upon you; and will find you out, every atom of you, when all your bones shall have powdered. The great fact of a resurrection, the great reality of the spiritual body, we pray you in God's name, receive and respect. Our conjectures or theorizings thereon, are another matter, to be tried at the bar of reason and Scripture; and if recreant, let them fall. But here we stand on a platform, built by Him who built the world—found in this declaration. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

4. The natural body is what we now have. The spiritual body is what we shall have. What the natural body is, we know perfectly

well—this gross animal body, a body whose functions are all fitted to this animal life; a body nurtured and sustained by natural means. It is the body that suffers, that dies, that we commit to the earth.

The spiritual body—here we open into a field of mystery: but still we know something, because the Bible says something. Indeed, it utters all the great essential facts, the sublime results in the case.

II. There is a spiritual body. Here we make one point on the authority of Scripture, namely, it is body. The soul at the resurrection receives a body; in an important sense, receives back the body. This mortal is to put on immortality—language full of a striking and wonderful meaning. The meaning is, that human nature, re-constructed from the grave, is to inhabit eternity; not, as one forcibly remarks, “not an ethereal rudiment just saved from the wreck of the former fabric, and just serving to connect, as by a film of identity, the earthly with the heavenly state. It is, THIS MORTAL that must put on immortality: the very nature now subject to dissolution is to escape from the power of death, and to clothe itself in imperishable vigor.”*

But the phrase, “a spiritual body,” it seems a contradiction in terms: a spiritual body, in other words, a body all spirit. That is not it, for that would be a contradiction in terms. A body involves the very idea and necessity of matter. The spiritual body is a material body. This necessarily, or it is not a body. In its constitution, it is some refined modification of matter. And the extent to which matter may be refined and etherealized, we can not, in our present grossness, fully understand. That the product of the resurrection is a body, a material structure, of wonderful properties, is the basis of all the Apostle’s reasoning on the subject; what, indeed, he all along takes for granted. “God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased him.”

1. Furthermore, the very doctrine so clearly taught, the resurrection, necessarily implies, that they are material structures, that are to come forth and have their place in the heavenly economy. If not, why must the spirit thus come down, and “knock at the very grave” where lie the mouldered remains of the body it wore: why disturb that sleeping dust, unless it is to be rebuilt—itsself material, therefore some material structure to come from it?

2. Furthermore, that it is so, the spiritual a material body, is evident from this, that it is to be like unto Christ’s glorious body. And we are informed what Christ’s was after his resurrection. Said he to his disciples, a little before his ascension: “Behold, my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.” And with the same body he went up into heaven.

* Isaac Taylor.

It is supposed, that in the ascension a change took place, refining and glorifying that body; but not destroying its essential elements. The eleven apostles all saw the resurrection body of Christ. It seems that it was necessary that they should see him after his rising from the dead. Paul too, the last, not the least of the apostles, though he thought so, was permitted to see the resurrection body of Christ. He asks with this reference: "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" Have not I as well as the rest of the Apostles seen the risen Lord? And when? On his way to Damascus, he saw the resurrection body, then the glorified body—the body that came forth, the body that ascended, which he could not have seen, had it not been a material while it was a glorified body. The idea of a spiritual body, then, does not preclude the presence and partnership of matter, but embraces it.

The question comes back: Why is it called a spiritual body? We answer, for the same reason, that the present is called a natural body. This is a natural body, because it is fitted to be an abode and an instrument of this animal life; being earthly and sensuous like this life. The other is called a "spiritual body," because it is such in its material and form, as will perfectly fit it to serve the spirit, in its higher, nobler, imperishable existence—spiritual, a body that shall be no burden, require no care, no replenishment; spiritual, as being the spirit's quickener, developing, elevating, helping the spirit, in all its vast operations.

We come now into the region of amazing contrasts. The great facts about that body, we get by contrast. So the Apostle states the matter in the text: "Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption: sown in dishonor, raised in glory: sown in weakness, raised in power."

The first attribute is imperishability. Though matter, though a body, it shall flourish coëval with the inhabiting spirit. We see deposited in the ground a gross, unseemly, dissolving structure. It comes forth incorruptible. No weapon can smite it. No pain can enter it. No form of death can reach it more. We have here, matter endowed as it were, and pervaded with all the salient and springing energies of life—defying the action of time, and all other powers but the fiat of the Almighty. God could bring it down, and bring it to an end: but God's word of promise is, that it shall stand as it rose, incorruptible; onward, onward—a mortal that hath put on immortality.

3. Another quality of the raised body is honor; not mean, depressed, but bearing all noble and attractive qualities. As Paul has it, "it is raised in glory." As committed to its final bed, it is ghastly, deformed, repulsive. It comes up in an aspect of beauty and of splendor, like unto Christ's glorious body. Here, in this phrase, we have something specific and palpable; something to steady our traversings on this gorgeous sea of mystery. "Like unto

Christ's glorious body," now in heaven; or it may be, like unto Christ, transfigured on the Mount, when his face shot radiance, and his garments glistened, and the whole person put on the image and the overpowering brightness of the heavenly. Or like Christ as he appeared in the Revelation, when his countenance was as the sun that shineth in his strength, and his entire form wore a lustre so intense, that the amazed disciple fell down before him as dead. What a glory must that have been thus to prostrate and stiffen in the semblance of death the wondering beholder! It was the glory of Jesus' body. And when his followers shall be like him, not equal to, but like him, then, what a glory shall encompass them!

Another attribute of the recovered body is power. Not so as it enters the grave: then we see it to be absolutely helpless; every faculty perished; impotent, senseless as the clod thrown on to cover it. It shall come forth in power. Power it shall have when it comes forth. Great power there may be of achievement, of producing physical effects. Angels are represented as having this power; power to remove obstacles, to inflict judgments, to execute the most difficult decrees, the most terrible behests. Fetters of iron are but as tow in their grasp, and armed myriads as children's playthings before them. One hundred and eighty-five thousand of the enemies of Israel fell before one in a single night. Well may they be called mighty angels; mighty and excelling in strength; but not surpassing the Christian in his glorified body. For inspiration writes on such, "equal unto the angels;" and why not in this very respect, in power to do, to achieve, to serve God?

5. Furthermore, it will be a power to bear as well as to do. What! burdens in that world, do you mean? Yes; this burden—an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. As we are now constituted, it would wilt and dissolve us in a moment. When Paul was caught up and permitted to look through the door in upon these things, he could not tell whether he had a body or not. His body, doubtless, kept at a respectful distance. We have accounts of some Christians, in some peculiar, apocalyptic moments, or when God has been too lavish in the manifestations of his glory, and too intense a brightness has met their vision, in whom all the wheels of life stopped, and they sunk down at once, unconscious and inanimate. If they could not bear even that, what would be the case if brought right into the center and depth of the blazing glories of an unveiled eternity? One text of Scripture would very soon receive its commentary, "that flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God." No power in these elements to bear those enormous loads and burdens of blessedness. Something more refined, more instinct with vitality, is wanted, and is furnished in that body that shall be raised in power; a power adequate to meet the visions and the glories of that place;

a power to bathe in those floods of light, and be refreshed and made still stronger by what would otherwise blast and consume it. In short, it will be a power adequate to endure heaven. That will be something, my friends, to be able to endure heaven.

But we reach the climax of our text and our subject in that attribute—spiritual: raised a spiritual body. This indeed embraces all the rest. It has the qualities of incorruption, immortality, glory, power, because a spiritual body. We began with this in our discussion; we end with it. It is raised a spiritual body.

III. Let me take this quality, spiritual, and go forth again into the field of its capabilities. A spiritual body, therefore, ever ready to engage in service; no weariness, no flagging in service, in enjoyment, day nor night, if there were any night there; but there is no night there, because no needed repose.

A spiritual body; therefore endowed with amazing activity, and power of motion and of communication. This is probable. It is what we know in the case of the angels: great power of motion, darting with the rapidity of light; space presenting no barrier; passing from world to world almost with the quickness of thought, so ethereal are they. We fall back upon that inspired and inspiring comparison, the glorified at the resurrection are to be equal with the angels—equal, probably, in this power of quick and vast transition. And what a power this will be! What capabilities herein to serve God! What ministries of benevolence, and how fast they shall be done, when the stride and the leap may be from world to world, as we now go from house to house! Then the circle of fellowship, how it will stretch itself illimitably round; the acquaintance and sympathies, and intermingled transports, how they will be diffused through all space, where dwells a single pure and loyal subject!

What opportunities not only to serve but to study God; behold and study him in the work of his hands; the powers in question constituting a species of ubiquity; made capable of reaching in a moment the point where Deity may be revealing himself in any new work or wonder, there to see and adore; the universe thrown open; immensity the school-room; the term an eternity, and not a moment of that lost; ever studying and drinking in knowledge, with every eager sense. And though acquisition comes almost with the ease and fullness of intuition, it is kept: all the garnered treasures are retained, while others are added on, and still new accumulations piled on upon the old; then this knowledge, all baptized by the spirit of holiness, is used as fuel to feed the flame of love to God; the spirit ever loving, and the body ever aiding, in the spirit's utmost ardor and outpouring perpetuity of love. In this way, the body, as it will be, ministers to the spirit's largest growth

and blessedness ; takes in God, until filled, at length, with all that fullness, every chord of feeling, every fibre and nerve, shall vibrate with ecstasy, and pour forth an exuberant gladness. Who can tell what a body can do for the inhabiting spirit? We know something of what it has done. Mysterious, mournful connection, sometimes, in this world, the soul has drooped and sunk with a load it could not bear. And such a case only shows the vital power of the connection. Transfer your thoughts forward to that bright scene, and that wondrous union—a perfect spirit dwelling in a spiritual and glorified body ; then there will be a capacity for joy, and an experience, too, such as a spirit alone, a soul disembodied, can never approach to. I know not, but that spiritual body will all but double the spirit's blessedness, through the cycles of its eternal progression.

1. Let me remind all who hear me, that this is the work and gift of God ; a work and gift bestowed only on certain distinctly specified conditions ; this the condition, this the will of God—I give it in the words of Christ : “That every one that seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” This the character, the believer in Jesus, the Christian in heart and life. He shall attain to the resurrection of the dead ; he be clothed with this garment of brightness, this resplendent spiritual body.

There is, then, a preparation needed, a heart-work and change, a meetness of character for it. And you have a responsibility in the premises : to choose, to do, to be. Men are not saved in the Gospel system by the working of a fatality ; nor by the turning of a wheel ; not saved by a mechanical process, dug up and saved : not saved by a chemical process, purified from a process of putrefying. But saved by faith ; a faith working by love, and the faith and love working out the obedience ; saved by two resurrections ; the first a resurrection to newness of life ; then, consequent upon this, that final resurrection to a glorified and an endless life.

2. Another remark : This matter of being saved is a great matter ; saved from sin, from death, from hell ; brought out from that penury and infamy and woe ; and brought into the possession of astonishing privileges, powers, and prospects ; brought up a perfected spirit, endowed with a spiritual body ; stamped with God's pledge and seal of immortality ; empowered with the range of the universe—to gather knowledge and wealth from all the works and worlds of the Infinite One.

I point you to that product of the resurrection, and ask : Have you thought seriously, that you could be that? And if you can be that, what else do you wish to be, or to have? Is there any thing else, in the comparison, worth being or having? The height and wealth of that attainment, the resurrection, the spiritual body, is sufficient to dim and dwarf all these gay and painted and bloated

things the world are so mad after—all little, low, mean, before this supernal splendor. If you succeed and get them, what have you got—what, as your inventory will read on that day of death's wasting work, and on that other day of death's final undoing—that glorious day of rebuilt frames and fortunes? These are great things, astounding to thought, and staggering to faith, but for this, that we get hold of and hold on upon, namely, the Promiser and the Performer is God.

There, put down your anchor, and make fast, and look up, and expect that all these amazing things will be done, and these transcendent capabilities be realized in your case, if you are a Christian.

Let me say, farther, that not only have you a vast deal to expect: you have nothing to fear. With this hope authentic in your breast, death shall come and bring no terror. His brandished dart shall not move the slightest fibre of your frame. And what is strange, the shuddering and recoiling you feel in the distant remove, and dim prospect of this hour shall all depart when you come to the close and fatal grapple; and while you bend and fall beneath that inevitable stroke, your very fall will be a triumph, and the shout go up: "O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?"

Inasmuch as Christianity thus honors the body, and opens to this mortal the prospect of immortality, it follows that men have a vast interest and duty here. And we say in the enforcement of it: Take care of your bodies; and do this by providing for their immortal destination. They must come forth from the grave. Believe with a faith, and hope with an expectation, and live with a discipline, a purity, and an obedience which shall promise to them a rising to life and glory. Pamper them not; debase them not. Oh! sink them not to those weltering flames, that place of writhing torment.

We point you to the good, the glory, the immortality, and ask you to make that your end, your aspiration. If there be any thing noble and responsive in your manly soul, then reach upward, seize it, take it—don't miss it. Make not your final bed with the damned.

SERMON III.*

BY THE REV. THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

"He hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. 1 : 10.

THE men of this earth carry on their designs and their doings just as if on earth they were to live forever. Each is so intent upon his own earthly objects; every heart is so occupied with its own earthly schemes; every countenance speaks such deep and over anxiety after some favorite yet earthly ambition; each individual is so decidedly embarked, with all his powers of attention and perseverance, in some earthly undertaking, that surely one would think that can be naught of a temporary nature which either creates or keeps up so mighty a stir among our species. And yet it is not the less true that all the busy activities of all these people have their upshot in forgetfulness. It is not the greatness or the durability of the object which has called forth the effort and the strenuousness of men; it is the folly of men that urges them to the pursuit of paltry and evanescent objects—a folly which overlooks the arithmetic of our little years, and has invested them with the characters of eternity—a folly which all the demonstrations of experience have been unable to rectify, and which, after the mighty sweep of countless generations from the face of our world, reigns with unequalled strength over the human heart, and finds the men of the present day as unwise and as infatuated as ever. Death is a theme of mighty import, and every variety of eloquence has been exhausted on the magnitude of its desolations. There is not a place where human beings congregate together that does not, in the fleeting history of its inmates, give the lesson of their mortality. Is it a house? Death enters unceremoniously there, and, with rude hand, tears asunder the dearest of our sympathies. Is it a town? Every year Death breaks up its families, and the society of our early days is fast melting away from us. Is it a market-place? Though at the end of twenty years I see a crowd as busy and as numerous as before, these are new faces which meet me,

* Preached in the Scotch Church, Swallow street, London; obtained there soon after; and is now printed in this form to accompany the portrait of its author, and to gratify those who revere his memory.—EDITOR OF N. P.

and new names which fall upon the ear. Is it a church? The aspect of the congregation is changing perpetually; and in a little time another people will enter these walls, and another minister will speak to them. Is it the country at large? On every side we see a shifting population; another set of occupiers to the farms; and other names are annexed to the properties.

But this is viewing the subject at a distance. Every assemblage of objects is composed of individuals. And think of the numbers that must have suffered to accomplish the change which I have now set before you. Think that each of these individuals carried in his bosom a living principle, and that principle is now to all appearance extinguished—that each felt as warmly and as alive to the world as perhaps any who now hears me, and that this world the stern necessity of death forced them to abandon forever—that each was as feelingly open to pain and fear, and that the forebodings, and the reluctance, and the agonies of death came upon all of them—that each had hopes, and plans, and wishes to accomplish, but that death forced them away, and they are all buried in forgetfulness along with them. “All is vanity, saith the preacher;” and it is death which stamps this character on the affairs of the world—it throws a mockery upon all that is human—it frustrates the wisest plans, and absolutely converts them into nothingness. All the ecstasies of pleasure, all the splendors of fame, all the triumphs of ambition, all the joys of domestic tenderness, all that the eye can look upon, or the heart aspire after, *this, this* is their affecting termination—death absorbs all, it annihilates all. Our fathers who strutted their little hour on this very theater, were as active and noisy as we—the loud laugh of festivity was heard in their dwellings; and in the busy occupations of their callings, they had their days of labor and their nights of painful anxiety; the world carried on it the same face of activity as now—and where are the men who kept it up in their successive generations? They are where we shall soon follow them; they have gone to sleep—but it is the sleep of death—their bed is a coffin, in which they are mouldering—the garment which they have thrown aside is their body, which served them through life, but is now lying in loose and scattered fragments in the little earth that they claim.

And it does aggravate our hopelessness of escape from death, when we look to the wide extent and universality of its ravages. We see no exception—it scatters its desolations with unsparing regularity among all the sons and daughters of Adam. It perhaps adds to our despair when we see it extending to the lower animals, or behold the lovely forms of the vegetable creation dissolving into nothing. It carries to our observation all the immutability of a general law; we can look for no mitigation of the incorrigible distemper; we can not reverse the process of nature,

nor bid her mighty elements to retire. Is there no power, then, superior to nature, and which can control it? To us a law of the universe carries the idea of some fixed and unalterable necessity along with it, and of none more strict, more unfailing, and more widely extensive in its operation than the law of death. In the wide circuit of things does there exist no high authority that can abolish this law? no power that can overthrow death, that can grapple with this mighty conqueror and break his tyranny to pieces? We never saw that Being, but the records of past ages have come down to us, and we there read of the extraordinary Visitor who lighted on these realms, where death had reigned so long in all the triumphs of extended empire. Wonderful enterprise! He came to destroy death. Vast undertaking! He came to depose nature from this conceived immutability; and a law which embraced within its wide grasp all who live and move on the face of the world, he came to overturn; and he soon gave token of a power commensurate to the mighty undertaking. That nature, to whose operations we are so apt to ascribe some stubborn and invincible necessity, gave way at his coming; she felt his authority through all her elements and she obeyed it. Wonderful period! when the constancy of nature was broken in upon by Him who established it—when the Deity vindicated his honor, and the miracles of a single age, committed to authentic history, gave evidence to all futurity that there is a power above nature and beyond it. What more unchanging than the aspect of the starry heavens—and in what quarter of her dominions does nature maintain a more silent and solemn inflexibility, than in the orbs which roll around us? Yet, at the coming of that mighty Saviour, these heavens broke silence—music was heard from their canopy, and it came from a congregation of living voices, which sung the praises of God, and made them fall in articulate language on human ears. After this, who can call nature unalterable? Jesus Christ hath abolished death, he has made perpetual invasion upon nature's constancy, and she never, in a single instance, resisted the word of his power. "What manner of man is this?" said his disciples, "even the winds and the sea obey him!" Philosophers love to expatiate, and they tell us of the laws of the animal and the vegetable kingdom. These laws may prove an impassable barrier to us, but in the hand of the omnipotent Saviour they were nothing—He reversed or supported them at pleasure; he blasted the fig-tree by a single word; and what to us was the basis of high anticipation, he made man the subject of his miracles. He restored sight to the blind, he restored speech to the dumb, he restored motion to the palsied, and to crown his triumph over nature and her processes, he restored life to the dead—he laid down his own life, and took it up again. The disciples gave up all for lost when they saw the champion of their hopes made the

victim of the very mortality which he promised to destroy. It was like the contest and victory of nature—but it was only to make his triumph the more complete. He entered

“That undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveller e’er returns.”

But he did. He broke asunder the mighty barriers of the grave; he entered and he reanimated that body which expired on the cross, and by that most striking of all testimonies he has given us to know that he hath fought against the law of death, and hath carried it.

But man not only wants *power* to achieve his own immortality, he also wants *light* to discover it. That such, in spite of every appalling exhibition to the contrary, is really to be the ultimate state of man, is not brought to light by reason. The text indeed says as much, in saying that “it is brought to light by the Gospel.” It represents the great truth as groped by nature, and only made clear by revelation; it seems to cast discredit on all the arguments of science, in behalf of a future state; and just for want of a sufficient basis in the evidence of philosophy, on which to rear this noble anticipation, it would rest and establish it wholly on the evidence of faith.

In the further prosecution of this discourse, let me

- I. *First, advert to what may be called the physical state; and*
- II. *Secondly, to the moral state of the mind; and under this head let me endeavor to contrast the insufficiency of the light of nature with the sufficiency and fullness of the light of the Gospel.*

I. *First*, then, in regard to the *physical* state of the mind. An argument for its immortality has been drawn from the consideration of what we should term the physics of the mind, that is, from the consideration of its properties when it is regarded as having a separate or substantive being of its own. For example—it has been said the spirit is not matter, and therefore must be imperishable. We confess that we see not the force of this reasoning. We are not sure of the premises, and neither do we apprehend how the conclusion flows from them. We think ourselves familiar with the subtleties and scholastics that have been uttered upon this subject—they are to us far from satisfactory; nor are we persuaded of it by evidence on which we rest our belief in any coming event, or coming state, of the futurity that lies before us. We can not have the force of practical evidence on those abstract and metaphysical generalities which are employed to demonstrate the endurance, or rather the indestructibleness, of the thinking principle, so as to be persuaded that it shall indeed survive the dissolution of the body, and shall separately maintain its consciousness and powers on the other side of the grave. Now, in the recorded

fact of our Saviour's resurrection, we see what we might call a more popular, as well as a more substantial and convincing argument for the soul's immortality, than any thing furnished by the speculations we have now referred to. To us the one appears as much superior to the other as history is more solid than hypothesis, or as experience is of a texture more firm than imagination, or as the philosophy of our modern Bacon is of a surer and juster character than the philosophy of the old schoolmen. Now, it is on the fact of his own resurrection that Christ rests the hope and the promise of resurrection to all of us. "If he be not risen from the dead," saith one of the apostles, "we are of all men the most miserable." It is to this fact that he appeals for the foundation and the hope of immortality. To every cavil and to every difficulty he opposes this as a sufficient argument—that *Christ has risen*. This was Paul's argument, and it has descended by inheritance to us. We have received the testimony—we have access to the documents—we can take a view of the unexampled evidence which has been carried down to us in the vehicles of history; and in opposition to all which fancy or speculation can muster against us, we can appeal to the fact. It is not a doctrine excogitated by the ingenuities of human reasoning—it is a doctrine submitted to the observation of the human senses. It is not an untried experiment; while Jesus Christ lived on our earth he made it repeatedly, and with uniform success, upon others; and in giving up his body to the cross he made it upon himself. One who would carry an experiment such as this to a successful termination, has a claim to be listened to; and he tells us, by the mouth of an apostle, that the fact of himself having risen bears most decidedly upon the doctrine that we shall rise also; "for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

2. Let it be remembered, before we conclude this head of discourse, that the word which is rendered, "*abolished*," signifies also "*made of none effect*." "He hath abolished death, or made death of none effect." The latter interpretation of the word is certainly more applicable to our *first* or *temporal* death. He has not *abolished* temporal death; it still reigns with unmitigated violence, and sweeps off each successive generation with as great sureness and rapidity as ever. This part of the sentence is not abolished, but it is rendered ineffectual. Death still lays us in the grave, but it can not chain us there to everlasting forgetfulness; it puts its cold hand on every one of us, but a power higher than death will lift it off, and these forms be again reanimated with all the warmth of life and of sentiment. The church-yard has been called the land of silence—and silent it is indeed to them who occupy it—the Sabbath-bell is no longer heard, nor yet the tread of the living population above them; but though remote from the hearing of every

earthly sound, yet shall the sound of the last trumpet enter the loneliness of their dwelling, and be heard through death's remotest caverns. When we open the sepulchres of the men of other times, the fragments, the skeletons, and the mouldering of bones, form indeed a humiliating spectacle; but the working of the same power which raised Jesus from the dead shall raise corruption to a glorious form, and invest it in all the blush and vigor of immortality. "So is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

3. There is much need that we be habitually reminded of these things, for in truth we live in almost constant forgetfulness of them. The region of sense and the region of spirituality are so unlike the one to the other, that there is positively nothing in our experience of the former which can at all familiarize our minds to the conception of the latter. And then, as if to obstruct the flight of our imaginations onward to eternity, there is such a dark and cloudy interceptment that hangs upon the very entrance of it; ere we can realize that distant world of souls, we must press our way beyond the curtain of the grave—we must scale the awful barricado which separates the visible from the invisible—we must make our escape from all the close, and warm, and besetting urgencies, which in the land of human beings are ever plying us with constant and powerful solicitations, and force our spirits across the boundaries of sense to that mysterious scene where cold and meager and evanescent spirits dwell together in some unknown and incomprehensible mode of existence.

4. We know not if there be any other tribe of beings in the universe who have such a task to perform. Angels have no death to undergo—there is no such affair of unnatural violence between them and their final destiny—it is for *man*, and for aught that appears, it is for man *alone* to fetch, from the other side of a material panorama that hems and incloses him, the great and abiding realities with which he has everlastingly to do—it is for him, so locked in an imprisonment of *clay*, and with no other available medium than the eye and the ear—it is for him to light up in his bosom a lively and realizing sense of the things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard"—it is for man, and perhaps for man alone, to travel in thought over the ruins of a mighty desolation, and looking to the wreck of the present world by which he is encompassed, to conceive that future world in which he is to expatiate forever. But harder achievement, perhaps, than any, it is for man in the

exercise of faith, to bear that most appalling of all contemplations, the decay and the dissolution of himself—to think of the time when his now animated frame-work, every part of which is so sensitive and so dear to him, shall fall to pieces—when the vital warmth by which at present it is so thoroughly pervaded, shall take its final departure, and leave to coldness and abandonment all that is visible and lovely of the present structure—when these limbs with which he now steps so firmly, and that countenance out of which he now looks so gracefully, and that tongue with which he now speaks so eloquently, and that whole body, for the interests and preservation of which he now labors so assiduously, as if it were indeed immortal—when all these shall be reduced to one mass of putrefaction, and shall crumble, like the coffin which incloses him, into dust.

Why, my friends, to beings constituted as we are, there is something so foreign and unnatural in death, that we are not to wonder if it scare away the mind from those scenes of existence to which it is the stepping-stone. Angels are not so circumstanced—there is no screen of darkness like this interposed between them and any portion of their futurity, however distant; and it appears only of man, that it is for him to drive a breach across that barrier which looks so impregnable; and so to surmount the power of vision as to carry his aspirations over the summit of all that vision has made known to him.

II. Before I proceed to our next argument for the immortality of the soul, let me only remark, as a strong practical proof of the necessity of something higher and more influential than the mere power of reasoning upon the subject, *how strongly wedded we are to the things of sense and of time, in spite of every demonstration, however affecting, that is given of their vanity.* It is wonderful, it is passing wonderful, that we should abide in such an abstract state of insensibility, and that in the face of all experience, and I may add of all arithmetic. For the *average* of human life is numerically known; and should there be an overweening confidence to carry our hopes beyond this average, the *maximum* of human life is numerically known; and to balance the uncertainty whether our days on earth may not greatly *exceed* the average, there is an equal uncertainty whether they may not greatly fall short of it. There is no point from its origin downwards at which Death may not lay his arrest on the current of human existence; and, as if the whole domain of society were his own, does he go forth at large from one extreme to the other of it; nor is there a single portion of the territory on which, with free and unfaltering footstep, he may not enter. In the church-yard we see graves of every dimension. This land of silence is far more densely peopled by young than by old—proving that through all departments of life, whether of age,

or of youth, or of infancy, the arrows of this mighty destroyer flee at random. Parents have oftener to weep over their children's tomb, than children have to carry their parents to that place where lies the mouldering heap of the generations that have already gone by. So that we have the clearest light both of arithmetic and experience on the subject; and one would think it superfluous to hold any parley with the understanding on a topic on which the proof is so overpowering. Why, it may be thought, should we be so anxious for urging a truth which may safely be left to its own evidence, or take occasion strenuously and repeatedly to affirm what none is able to deny? And this is just the marvellous anomaly of our nature which it is so difficult to explain. In the face of all this evidence, and in utter opposition to the judgment extracted thereby, there is an obstinate practical delusion that resides most constantly within the heart, and rules most imperiously over the judgments of the vast majority of our species. It is not that we are incapable of all influence from futurity—for it is the future gain of the present adventure, or the future issue of the present arrangement, or the future result of the present contrivance, that sets almost the whole of human activity a-going. But it is the future *death*, and the future condition on the other side of it, to which we are so strangely insensible. We are all in the glow, and the bustle, and eagerness of most intense expectation, about the events that lie in the intermediate distance between us and death, and as blind to the certainty of the death itself, as if this distance stretched indefinitely onward in the region of anticipation before us, or as if it were indeed an eternity. There is a deep sleep into which our world has been lulled, as if by all the powers of fascination, from which it would seem impossible to awaken us.

1. Nor do we now expect of any utterance of the brevity of time that it will awaken you. For this purpose there must be the putting forth of a force that is supernatural; and the most experimental demonstration that we know of this necessity, is the torpor of the human soul about death, and the temerity wherewith it stands its ground amidst pathetic and plain exhibitions of it. We are never more assured of man, that he is wholly sold over to the captivity of this world, than in witnessing the strong adherence of his heart to it under the most touching experience of its vanity—than in perceiving how unemptied he is of all his earthliness, whether he goes from business to burials, or back again from burials to business—than in observing how, after having buried his neighbor in the dust, he remains buried, as it were, in the concerns of the world, and will betake himself again with an eagerness as intense and unbroken to its concerns and companies as before. We affirm that, of the spell which binds him to earth, no power within the compass of nature is able to disenchant him;

that argument will not; that instances of mortality in his own dwelling will not; that sermons will not; and the evident approach of the last messenger to his own person will not: and it is indeed a most affecting spectacle to behold, with the warnings and the symbols of a dissolution which so speedily awaits him, that he just hugs more closely to his heart when on the eve of being taken away from his treasures forever. Give me then a man who is actually alive to the realities of faith; and the inference from all is, that another power than that of the influence of nature over the feelings of nature must have been put forth to awaken him. There is not, within the compass of all that is visible, any cause competent to the production of such an effect on the human spirit. The power which awakens him to a sense of spiritual things, cometh from a spiritual Creator. There is naught in the world that is present, which can bring a human soul under the dominion of the world that is to come. And although one would have thought that the follies and fluctuations of time would have been sufficient to wean men from a portion so evanescent and unsatisfying, and to point them to the things of eternity, yet it would appear not; the loss and desolation which attach to the life of sense, and the certainty of all it can command being speedily and totally swept away, these will not of themselves germinate within the man the life of faith.

2. This wondrous phenomenon of our nature convinces me of the doctrine of regeneration—that there is no power short of this which can spiritualize us—that ere our affections can be set on things that are above, an influence from above must descend upon us—and that before we become alive to the delights and glories of the upper sanctuary, there must come down from that sanctuary the light and power of a special revelation. A far more satisfactory argument than that which is founded upon the reasonings of philosophy, for this doctrine is to be found in the fact of the resurrection of Christ. To satisfy yourselves upon rational grounds, as to the immortality of the soul, we would say, study the historical evidence for the truth of this fact. The *physical* argument of *nature* for the doctrine is grounded on certain obscure reasonings about the properties and indestructibleness of the mind; the *physical* argument of *Christianity* again is grounded on the truth, the historically established truth, that Christ has actually risen; on the credit of this specimen, and with all the authority that is given by a miracle so stupendous, rests the doctrine of the general resurrection.

3. In the third place, the *moral* argument of *nature* for the soul's immortality is furnished by the sense which is in all spirits of God's justice, and of his yet unsettled controversy with sin. In the *moral* argument of *Christianity* again, the doctrine is revealed in connection with the doctrine of the atonement; it rises every day in

strength and in assurance in the experience of the believer, who feels in himself what nature never feels—a glowing meetness of spirit and character, which forms at once the preparation and the earnest of the inheritance which awaits him. In order to get at the *physical* argument of Christianity, you have to study the historical evidence for the truth of Christianity, considered as a religion of facts. In point of fact, however, this rational conviction will do very little in the way of bringing you under the power of things unseen and things eternal. I believe we are never effectually brought under this power but by the study of the *moral* argument; and this moral argument can only be drawn from the *internal* evidence of Christianity in opposition to the *external* evidence. The moral argument never can be appreciated adequately, but by those on whom the internal evidence of Christianity has produced its right impressions. But before we proceed to consider strictly this argument, let us attend to how it really stands in the theology of nature—for natural theology also lays claim to moral arguments. These have been drawn by philosophers from the moral state of the mind, and more especially from the progressive expansion which they affirm to belong to it. Still we fear that, in respect to this argument, there is no experience to support it. There is a beauty, we do confess, in many of their representations. But beauty is only for them that sit at ease. It is a cruel mockery for the man who is stretched on the bed of death, and has in his view the dark ocean of annihilation and despair. Yes, we have heard them talk, and talk eloquently too, of the high and triumphant progression of the good man—of his virtues and of his prospects—and of his death being a gentle transition to a better world—of its being the goal where he reaps the honorable-reward that is due to his character—as being little more than a step that leads him to a blessed immortality. Ay, this is all very fine, but it is the fineness of poetry. Where is the evidence that it is real? We see it not. Why so cruel an interruption to the progress? Why cross this awful and mysterious death? Why is the good man not suffered to carry on in his triumphant progress? and why comes this dark and unintelligible event to be interposed between him and the full accomplishment of his destiny? You may choose to call it a step, but there is no virtue in a name to quell our suspicions—it bears in every circumstance all the marks of a termination. We see their fortitude giving way to the power of disease—we see them withering into feebleness, and instead of what has been called the dignity of man, we see the weakness and the fretfulness of age—we see the body bending to the dust—we see it extended in all the agony of helplessness and pain, and yet we must call this a triumphant procession to eternity! We observe the emission of the last breath, but whether the spirit is extinct, or has fled to another region, nature tells us not. We call upon the

philosopher to reveal the mystery of death—we ask why the good man has such an ordeal to undergo?—why, like the angels, does he not flourish in perpetual vigor?—and how shall we explain that universal allotment, with all its affecting accompaniments of remorse, and agony, and despair? Death, my friends, gives the lie to all such speculations of all such moralists; but it only gives evidence and consistency to the statements of the Gospel.

4. The doctrines of the New Testament will bear to be confronted with the lessons of experience. They attempt no relaxment, and no palliation—they announce the truth in all its severity; nor do they attempt to strew flowers around the sepulchre, or throw a deceitful perfume into the rottenness of the grave. Were a physician to take up my case, and speak lightly of my ailment, while I knew that a consuming disease was lurking and making progress within me, I should have no confidence in him or in his remedies. I should like him to see the malady in its full extent, that the medicine applied may be such as to meet and to combat with it. Now, Christ, the physician of souls, has taken up our disease in all its magnitude. There is no covering or concealment thrown over it. Their account of death accords with our experience of it. What they tell us of death is just what we feel it to be. Not that thing of triumph, to those void of Christianity and beyond the circle of its influence, that nature says, but a thing of distress, and horror, and unnatural violence. He who is weak enough to be carried away by the false and flimsy representations of sentimentalism, must be lead to believe that each man who dies is only sinking gradually to repose, or winging his way to an ethereal world. But the Bible talks to us of the sting, and pangs, and terrors of death; and what we feel of the shrinking of nature, proves that it has experience upon its side. And those passages are particularly deserving our attention in which death is spoken of in its moral and spiritual bearings. Death, as it appears to the eye of the senses, is but the extinction of the life that we now live in the world; but that death which is revealed to us in the Gospel, is the effect and consequence of sin—sin is the root of the mischief, and it is a mischief which Scripture represents as stretching in magnitude and duration far beyond the ken of the senses. Had we no other ken than the senses, we should conceive death to be utter annihilation.

5. But distinct from the death of the *body*, there is what may be called the death of the *soul*—not a death which consists in the extinction of its consciousness, for the consciousness of guilt will keep by it forever—not a death which implies the cessation of feeling, for that feeling will continue to the last, though the feeling of intensest suffering—not a death by which all sense of God will be expunged, for the sense of God's offended countenance will prey upon it and agonize it through all eternity. He who undergoes this second—this spiritual death, does not thereby cease to have

life, but he ceases to have the favor of God, which is better than life—he lives, it is true, but it is the life of an exile from hope and from happiness—he lives, but it is in a state of hopeless distance from the fountain of living waters. God is at enmity towards him, and in his own heart there is enmity towards God. This, at least, is the death of all enjoyment; it is the death of every thing which belongs to a right moral state of existence. In this sense verily the soul is dead, though alive, most perfectly alive, to the corrosions of the worm that never dies; in this sense there has been a quenching of its life, though all awake to the scorchings of that fire which is never quenched. Temporal death in such a case is only the portal to sorer calamities. All who sin shall die—but this is not the conclusion of the sentence—but all who die in sin shall live in torment. Now, it promises well for our Saviour's treatment of this sore malady, that he hath, as it were, placed himself at the source of the mischief, and then made head against it. He hath combated the radical force and virulence of the disease—he hath probed it to the bottom, and has grappled with sin in its origin and in its principle—he has taken it away; for by the sacrifice of himself upon the accursed tree, he has expiated its guilt, and by the operation of the Spirit in the heart of the believer he is rooting out its existence. Had he only put together the fragments of my body, and recalled the soul to its former tenement, he should have done nothing—sin, both in its power and condemnation, would have claimed me as its own, and in appalling banishment from God it should have stepped in with an immortality, but an immortality of despair. But the author of the Gospel has swept off the whole tribe of combatants, and has made a decisive charge at the very heart and principle of the disease. He has *destroyed* sin; for he has canceled the sentence, and washed away the pollution; and by the constraining influence of redeeming love, he draws sinners unto God, where they shall ever rejoice in the purest light, and the happiest immortality.

6. To estimate aright the new moral existence into which Christ ushers every sinner who receives him, we have only to reflect for a moment on that state of distance and alienation from which He emancipates him. Formerly the man was either immersed in deepest oblivion and unconcern, in reference to that Being who made all and who upholds all, or, if his conscience be at all awake to a true sense of the holiness of the law, he must view the Law-giver with feelings of dread, and discouragement, and jealousy. There is a wide field of alienation between him and his Maker; and the fearful apprehensions of God's displeasure towards him engender in him back again additional dislike towards God. There is no community of affection or fondness between them; and pierced as he is by a conviction of guilt which he can not escape from, he imagines a scowl on the aspect of the Divinity—an awful

barrier of separation by which he is hopelessly and irrecoverably exiled from the sacred presence of the Eternal. His spirit is not at ease—he is glad to find relief, in the day-dreams of a busy world, from those solemn realities, the thought of which so often disquiets him; it seeks an opiate in the things of sense and of time, against the disturbance which it finds in the things of eternity; and so cradled is he in this profoundest lethargy, that while alive unto the world, he is dead unto God.

7. We can not imagine a greater revolution in the heart than that which is produced, upon this distrust or apathy being done away. When, instead of viewing God with fear, or shrinking from the thought of him, the sinner can calmly gaze on his reconciled countenance, and be assured of the complacency and good will that are graven thereupon. Now, a simple faith in the glad tidings of the Gospel is competent to awaken this. It loosens the spirit's bondage by transforming the aspect of the Divinity from the face of an enemy to that of a friend—it changes the sinner's hatred into love; and this affection, from the central, the commanding place, which it occupies, subordinates the whole man, and so utterly changes his moral system, as to make a new creature of him. The faith of the Gospel is something more than the formation of a new habit—it is the germ of a new heart, and so of a new character. The believer's sensibilities are now awakened to objects to which before he was morally dead. In other words, he now becomes alive to other objects, he expatiates on a new theater of contemplation, and he rejoices in other scenes and in other prospects than before; he has lost his relish for what he formerly had no delight in, and he now delights in what he formerly had no delight; if he is not ushered into life for the first time, he is at least ushered into a new state of things—he undergoes preferment from the animal to the spiritual life; and this life, with the immortality for which it is a preparation, is not only made clear by the Gospel, but faith in the Gospel may be said to have created it.

8. Now, all this is the doing of the Saviour. He has fully exposed the disease, and he has brought to it a radical cure. I can not trust the physician who dwells upon the surface of my disease, and throws over it the disguise of false coloring. I have more confidence to put in him who, like Christ, the physician of my soul, has looked the malady fairly in the face—has taken it up in all its extent and in all its soreness—has resolved it into its original principles—has probed it to the very bottom, and has set himself forward to combat with the radical elements of the disease. This is what our Saviour has done with death—he hath bereaved it of its sting—he has taken a full survey of the corruption, and met it in every one quarter where its malignity appeared. It was sin which caused the disease, and he hath extricated it—he hath put it away—he hath expiated the sentence—and the believer, rejoicing in the

sense that all is clear with God, serves him without fear, in righteousness and holiness, all the days of his life. The sentence is no longer against us; we behold the Saviour, and the sentence upon himself—"he bore our iniquities in his own body on the tree"—"he who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The sentence is no longer in force against us, as the Saviour has canceled it. He has done more than this—he has not only canceled the guilt of sin, he has destroyed its power—he reigns in the heart of the believer—he sweeps it of all its corruptions—he takes it up as it is—he makes it such as it should be—he brings the whole man under a thorough process of sanctification, so that while he lives, he adds one Christian grace unto another—when he dies, he rejoices in hope of the coming glory—when he stands at the bar of judgment, he is presented holy and unblamable in the sight of God and his Saviour. In the whole of his treatment, I see the skill, and intelligence, and superior conduct of a physician, who is up to the disease, and knows where the force of its malignity lies—who has a thorough insight into the properties of the mischief, and has reached forth an adequate remedy to counteract it—who, to abolish death, has directed the strength of his attack against *sin*, which is its origin—who has averted the condemnation of sin, by an expiatory sacrifice—and who has destroyed its power and influence by the operations of that mighty Spirit, whereby he can break down the corruptions of the human heart, and subdue it unto himself.

THE GRAND AGENT.

Finally. Before I conclude, let me direct your attention to the *grand Agent* in this wondrous restoration of a fallen world.

The work is His, and it is his *only*. Let not man offer to usurp, or to share it with him. We must take him, not as a fellow-helper in the cause, but as the *Captain of our salvation*. It was HE who trode the wine-press alone; his was all the contest, and to HIM belongs all the triumph. To HIM belongs the work of our redemption, in all its extent and in all its particulars. It was HIS sacrifice which redeemed us from the punishment of sin, and it is HIS Spirit which redeems us from its pollution. And sure we are *that* man is not in the right attitude for receiving the mighty boon proffered in the Gospel, until he has cast down his lofty imaginations, and cast himself with gratitude and emptiness into the Saviour's hands. Here I am under the two-fold misery of having been a sinner in time past, and being a sinner still—of having incurred a sentence which I can not expiate, and in danger of a death of destruction which I can not turn from. The case, in all its helplessness, and in all its difficulties, I make over wholly to the

Saviour. I may as well try to level yonder mountain as to try to move it by my own independent exertions. I obey the invitation of my Saviour: "Come unto me all ye that labor, and I will give you rest." I put the case into his hands; and if I do that in the assured hope that his redemption will provide for it, I shall not be disappointed. If I offer him the case, he will not refuse to take it up: "He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." He takes up the case which I have submitted to him, and examines it in its two leading particulars. I can not expiate the sentence, but the blood of his atonement can do that for me. I can not turn from the path of sin, but he can turn me by his grace; he can renew within me an obedient heart, and cause me to walk in all his statutes and judgments to do them. Harken, then, to the word of the testimony: "He that believeth upon the Son hath everlasting life." Believe, and you will come forth with alacrity at his call. From the contemplation of your own nothingness you will cast yourself upon the Saviour, and in his sufficiency you will make an entire and uncompromising surrender of yourselves to him. And be assured that from the first moment that you do so, you will be animated with the new hope of the redeemed, and exhibit the new life of the sanctified disciple. Such is the hope of the calling of all Christians—Christians in the true sense and significance of the name. Hold it firm and fast even unto the end, and the bed of death will be to you a scene of triumph, the last messenger will be a messenger of joy, and those bright images of peace, and repose, and elevation, which, *out of* Christ, are the mere fabrications of the fancy, will *in* Christ be found to have a reality and a fulfillment which shall bear you up, in the midst of your dying agonies, with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

DRAWING ASIDE THE CURTAIN.

This is no matter of mere idle declamation; there is many a minister of Christ who could give you experience for it. He can take you to the house of mourning, to the chamber of the dying man. He can draw aside the curtain which covers the last hours of the good man's existence, and show you how a good man can die. He can ask you to bend your ear, and catch the last faltering accents of praise and piety. What meaneth that joy in the midst of suffering—that hope in the midst of approaching dissolution—that elevation in the midst of cruelest agonies? It is not his own merit that sustains him, it is the merit of the exalted Saviour. It is not a sense of his own righteousness that gives peace to his conscience, it is the righteousness of Christ; it is the hope of being found in him, and a sense of the forgiveness which he has received through his hand. In a word, it is Christ who resolves the mys-

tery ; it is his presence that pours tranquillity and joy among such scenes of distress ; it is he who dispenses fortitude to the dying man ; and while despair sits on every countenance, and relations are weeping around him, he enables him to leave them all with this exulting testimony : "O death ! where is thy sting ? O grave ! where is thy victory ?"

While we hold out this triumphant prospect to those who entertain the overtures of reconciliation, we would urge all, even those who have not yet been visited with the spirit of concern and inquiry, to bestow one single thought on the great practical importance of the subject. The very sound of such words as *life* and *death*, *judgment* and *immortality*, should reduce you to sacredness—should set you to the work of serious reflection on this subject

THE MOMENT WILL COME.

We have the vantage ground of your own experience on which to stand while we endeavor thus to urge you. For your experience at least tells you thus much—that the time that is past, when you look back to it, appears as if it were nothing ; and you may believe from this, that the time which is to come, will come as quickly, and appear as little, and as unworthy to be suffered to tempt you away from eternity by its pleasures, which are but for a season, as the period of your life that is already gone. The very moment of your final farewell, if you are not previously cut short by death, which is a very possible thing, that moment will come, and old age will come, and the last sickness will come, and the dying-bed will come, and the last look you shall ever cast upon your relations will come, and the agony of the parting breath will come, and the time that you will be stretched a lifeless corpse before the eye of your weeping relations will come, and the coffin that is to inclose you will come, and that hour when the company assembles to carry you to the church-yard will come, and that moment when you are put into the grave will come, and the throwing in of the earth upon it, all—all will come on every living creature who now hears me. And in a few little years the minister who now addresses you, and each one who now listens, will be carried to their long home. Now all this will come ; you may have been careless or heedless about these things formerly, but I call upon you now to lay them seriously to heart, and no longer to trifle or to parley when the great scenes of life and eternity are thus set so evidently before you. What more shall I say ? Shall I carry you beyond the region of sense to the region of faith, and assure you in the name of Him who can not lie, that when the hour of laying the body in the grave comes, the hour of the spirit's returning to God comes too ? Yes, and the day of reckoning will come ;

and the appearance of the Son of God in heaven, and his holy angels around him, will come ; and the opening of the books will come ; and the appearance of every one of you before the judgment-seat will come ; and the solemn passing of the sentence which is to fix you for eternity will come ; and if you refuse to be reconciled to God in the name of Christ, now that he is beseeching you to repent, and if you refuse to turn from the evil of your ways, and to do and to be what your Saviour requires you to be and to do, I must tell you what the sentence is—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." To-day, then, while it is called to-day, harden not your hearts, seeing that *now* is the only accepted time, that you can count upon, and that now is the day of salvation.